

JSP 815

Element 6: Personnel, Competence, Resources and Training



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Amendment record

JSP 815 has been updated as a part of Defence Reform and will be subject to further scheduled reviews and updated as required.

This Element has been reviewed by the Directorate of Defence Safety and Support (DDSS) together with relevant subject matter experts and key Safety stakeholders. Any suggestions for amendments should be sent to People-DDS-GroupMailbox@mod.gov.uk.

Version No	Date published	Text Affected	Authority
1.0	Dec 22	BETA version for consultation	Dir HS&EP
1.1	7 Jun 23	Final version	DDS
1.2	10 Sep 24	Annual revision and combined Element and assurance framework	DDS
1.3	1 Sep 26	Scheduled revision and Defence Reform update	Dir-DSS

Terms and definitions

The term 'Defence Area' refers to one of the four top-level areas of Defence: Department of State (DOS), Armed Forces (MSHQ and Military Commands), National Armaments Director (NAD) Group and the Defence Nuclear Enterprise (DNE). Within Defence Safety Policy (JSP 815, JSP 375 and JSP 376), reference to a 'Defence Area' responsibility applies to the top-level Defence Area however, for the Armed Forces it also applies to their component Military Commands (Army, Air, Navy and CSOC).

General safety terms and definitions are provided in the [Master Glossary of Safety Terms and Definitions](#) which can also be accessed on [GOV.UK](#).

Must and should

Where this Element says must, this means that the action is a compulsory requirement.

Where this Element says should, this means that the action is not a compulsory requirement but is considered good practice.

Introduction

1. This Element provides the direction that must be followed and the guidance and good practice that should be followed and will assist users to comply with the expectations for personnel competence, resources and training that are set out in this Element. Personnel competence, resources and training at the highest level are set out in the [Defence Safety Operating Model](#).

Purpose and expectations

2. This Element requires Defence Areas to identify all safety roles that sit within the Safety and Environment Profession and associated roles with safety responsibilities and duties. They should identify the relevant safety, Knowledge, Skills application, Experience and Behaviours (KSEB) and expertise requirements. Where safety responsibilities and duties are not being met by the existing workforce, the Defence Area must develop a plan to address and mitigate gaps. This should be done through workforce planning, formal and informal learning, and personal professional development. Sufficient resources and funding must be identified to maintain personnel competence and ensure continual professional development as set out in the safety aspects of the letters of delegation issued to the Defence Area senior leaders. Further details on letters of delegation are set out in [Annex E](#) to this JSP.

3. This Element provides guidance relating to personnel competence, resources, and training with regards to safety across the department. Additional, broader guidance is available within JSPs [822](#) (Training and Purpose), [755](#) (Centre-Determined Policy for Career Management and the Admin of Tri-Service Positions and Assignments) and [794](#) (Defence Policy for Administration of Personal Development (APD) on JPA).

Resource and people planning

4. The Director of Defence Safety and Support (Dir-DSS), as the Safety Function leader will work with Defence Area senior leaders to ensure that their workforce plans include sufficient resources for the management of safety in their Area. In particular, Dir-DSS will:

- a. Articulate and explain the need placed on the Safety and Environment Profession for meeting key Department objectives and set out these requirements over the short, medium and long-term;
- b. Define where safety skills are needed, by considering internal and external factors and the latest 'best practice';
- c. Review the level of skills and knowledge within current Safety and Environment Professionals across Defence;
- d. Provide a 'gap analysis' to identify any lack of capabilities, positions, grades and resources within the Safety and Environment Profession;
- e. Establish an action plan which sets out how the Safety and Environment Profession can be developed to improve recruitment and retention, and improve capability through experience, learning and development and qualifications; and
- f. Identify opportunities for developing Defence Areas, including supporting effective planning for filling vacancies in safety-critical roles.

5. The Defence Area must ensure that sufficient resources are made available for the management of safety, proportionate with the risk profile of their area of responsibility. Competent persons must be appointed to safety-critical roles to safeguard Defence personnel and others who may be affected by the work activities, plant, equipment, and infrastructure under their control.
6. The Defence Area should also map all safety roles on HR management systems with Safety and Environment competencies, using the Safety and Environment Competency framework, which is part of the [Pan-Defence Skills Framework](#) (PDSF). In some cases, the Defence Area may need to develop a safety single skills framework, which should be endorsed by the Safety and Environment Profession.
7. Defence Areas should leverage strategic workforce planning where possible to build and improve Safety and Environment skills, experience, and competence within their workforce. This should be delivered through designated safety roles but also through high-risk activities which are resource planned to align to the appropriate skills and expertise.
8. Defence Area workforce planning includes identification of responsible roles, safety critical skills and roles and the number of available personnel. Consideration should be given to the management of critical risks, crucially in situations where one resource manages multiple safety critical roles. Capacity and competency gaps should be identified and monitored regularly with clear action plans in place to address and remedy these along with immediate mitigation actions.

Roles and responsibilities

9. Safety management roles and responsibilities should be identified, clarified within appropriate job profiles, and monitored within performance management frameworks. All personnel contribute to the overall success of safety management within a Defence Area.
10. The Guidance below covers the roles of Heads of Establishment, commanders, managers and all personnel. Defence Areas should assess their key stakeholders and confirm their responsibilities.

Heads of Establishment (HoE)

11. The Head of Establishment (HoE) should ensure that all Defence facilities and activities within their areas of responsibility comply with all applicable UK legislation (including legislation giving effect to the UK's international obligations) and with relevant host nations' standards. They should do this by providing and maintaining a working environment that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk of harm. The delivery of safety management is implemented via the Chain of Command and line management and treated as part of normal business.
12. There are other terms used for this role across Defence, such as Accountable Person, Officer Commanding (OC), Station Commander and so on, however the term Head of Establishment (HoE) will be used throughout this Element. Further details on HoE responsibilities are set out in [Annex D](#) of this JSP.

13. Organisational structures and management arrangements for discharging duties in accordance with UK H&S legislation, the Secretary of State (SofS) Policy Statement and Defence safety policy and regulations should be put in place. These should include identifying hazards and controlling potential risks, along with processes for monitoring the effectiveness of such arrangements. All applicable procedures and control measures must be brought to the attention of all Defence and external personnel impacted.

14. Co-operation and Co-ordination in a shared workplace (including temporary workplaces) is a mandatory requirement under UK H&S legislation. Where the infrastructure is managed by a Maintenance Management Organisation (MMO) or equipment is owned, maintained, or operated by a third-party organisation, the HoE should ensure that the point of demarcation is agreed, clearly defined, and documented.

Commanders and managers

15. The attitude and behaviour displayed by commanders and managers sets the tone for the Defence Area. Commanders and managers should ensure that safety tasks such as assessing risks, inspecting workplaces and the co-ordination of team / branch safety issues are conducted by competent personnel.

16. In addition to any task specific training, instruction and supervision, commanders and managers should ensure that induction training is provided to Defence personnel and visitors so that they are fully informed about the risks associated with their activities and the work environment. Training and induction arrangements should be accessible and take account of differing learning and communication needs.

17. Significant hazards within the commander's or manager's area of responsibility must be identified. Risk assessments must be completed, control measures implemented and the details communicated to Defence personnel, contractors, and visitors in accordance with [Chapter 8](#) (Safety risk assessment and safe systems of work) of JSP 375, Volume 1.

18. Workplace inspections should be undertaken at least once every six-months and more frequently in hazardous areas; and the findings recorded in accordance with [Chapter 4](#) (Workplace inspections) of JSP 375, Volume 1.

19. All work-related accidents, ill health and incidents (including near misses) must be reported in accordance with local procedures and the requirements of [Chapter 16](#) (Safety occurrence reporting and investigation) of JSP 375, Volume 1.

20. All relevant safety documents and activities under the control of the commander or manager should be maintained and made accessible to all applicable Defence personnel and for the purpose of safety reviews. Records must be retained in accordance with [Chapter 39](#) (Retention of records) of JSP 375, Volume 1.

All personnel

21. All personnel must take appropriate action and comply with control measures introduced to mitigate risk and follow rules and procedures put in place to safeguard their safety.

22. Personnel must take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their work activities. All personnel should:

- a. make themselves aware of and comply with Defence safety policy;

- b. comply with local safety procedures and arrangements;
- c. only operate equipment they are authorised and appropriately trained for;
- d. undertake induction programmes and other learning and development, as required;
- e. be made aware of who the Safety Personnel are and how to make contact for example, local Safety Advisers, Fire Officers and First Aiders;
- f. comply with the local accident and incident reporting procedures;
- g. not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided within the work environment for health, safety, and welfare purposes;
- h. wear appropriate PPE and clothing as directed (no loose clothing or jewellery) whilst operating equipment to avoid entanglement / entrapment hazards;
- i. inform their manager of any change in circumstances that may affect their ability to perform their tasks (for example, pregnancy, physical injury, medical condition);
- j. visually inspect equipment prior to each use; and
- k. report damaged, missing or misuse of safety equipment and unsafe practices.

Learning and development

23. It is a requirement of UK H&S legislation¹ that the employer provides their employees with the information, instruction, training and supervision to allow them to undertake their activities safely. The delivery of instruction and training can be through induction, practical on-the-job experience, formal instruction, or computer-based learning making sure it is accessible to all personnel who require it. There should be verification that training has been undertaken, understood, and repeated at appropriate intervals. Further guidance is available in the [Functional Competency Framework](#), and the [Safety & Environment Training Catalogue](#).

24. Defence Areas should formally record and set out their approach to safety training and articulate how it will enable their staff to execute the duties expected of them.

25. The programme should be reviewed periodically (see [JSP 822](#) - Defence Training and Education Policy and Guidance for guidance) to assess its effectiveness and relevance. This should be supported by a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) where appropriate.

26. Personnel should receive the training required to enable them to conduct their representative functions effectively.

Competence

27. [The Safety and Environment \(S&E\) skills and competencies site](#) issued by DDSS, hosts the S&E Functional Competency Framework and other S&E related skills and competencies guidance.

¹ Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 – [Section 2c](#), and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – [Regulation 13](#).

28. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines competence as “the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely.”

29. Anyone controlling or requiring a Defence activity to be undertaken must specify the level of safety competence required for any persons involved in that activity. Defence prescribes functional competencies for those with specific safety and environmental protection responsibilities and for those in a safety critical role.

Note: A safety-critical role refers to a position with formal responsibility for safety governance, oversight, assurance or provides competent advice to leaders in their Defence Area - where their absence or failure of their responsibilities in post could result in legal non-compliance, regulatory breach, or unacceptable risk to people, assets, or reputation. These roles typically:

- a. Hold delegated responsibility for safety under legal frameworks or the Defence safety management system.
- b. Influence or approve strategic safety decisions, policies, and risk tolerances.
- c. Ensure organisational compliance with safety legislation and standards.
- d. Are named accountable persons in safety governance structures.

30. These typically apply to the following roles (this is not an exhaustive list), each of which may also have specific role competence requirements:

- a. Commanders and managers;
- b. Heads of Establishment;
- c. Duty Holders;
- d. Safety Centre Directors;
- e. Chief Environment and Safety Officer (CESO) or equivalent;
- f. Safety, Health, Environment and Fire (SHEF) advisors;
- g. Fire safety managers;
- h. Explosives Safety Representatives;
- i. Safety practitioners; and
- j. Safety and Environment administrators.

31. Those with leadership and safety responsibilities such as Duty Holders, Commanding Officers, Heads of Establishment, commanders and managers or supervisors will require specific levels of experience and health and safety training. The CESOs (or equivalent) can provide advice on the broader Safety and Environment competence expectations, and the DSA can provide specialised Duty Holder training.

32. Duty Holders, commanders and managers and Heads of Establishment must make sure that anyone working within their area of responsibility, either Defence employees, contractors or industrial partners are competent to undertake the required activities safely and that those in a safety critical role have the relevant training.

33. The competence of workers should include the knowledge and skills needed to appropriately identify the hazards and deal with the safety risks associated with their work and their workplace.

34. Defence Areas should have robust processes to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements, including well established Continual Professional Development (CPD) arrangements. Assessments should be applied fairly and consistently and support equality of opportunity in development and progression.

35. In determining the competence for each role, the Defence Area should consider things such as:

- a. the education, training, qualification, and experience necessary to undertake the role;
- b. the work environment;
- c. the preventive and control measures resulting from the risk assessment process;
- d. the requirements applicable to their safety management arrangements;
- e. legal requirements and Defence policy and regulation requirements;
- f. the potential consequences of noncompliance, including the impact on personnel safety;
- g. the duties and responsibilities associated with the roles; and
- h. the relevant updating of the competence made necessary by context or work changes.

36. The Dir-DSS leads the professional development framework for Safety and Environment professionals, including training needs, qualifications, career development, and professional accreditation. The Dir-DSS develops, promotes and advertises [career pathways](#) available to all staff within the Safety and Environment Profession and the wider workforce, including apprenticeships and entry-level routes into the profession. These pathways should be in line with the Safety and Environment competency framework and should be available to all personnel including those from diverse backgrounds to support a representative profession.

Element assurance framework

37. The focus of this Element requires that the Defence Area has identified all roles with safety responsibilities and have in place a means of identifying skills, knowledge, experience, behaviours, and expertise requirements of those roles. Where this is not met by the existing workforce, plans are developed to address and mitigate gaps through workforce planning, formal and informal training, and development. Sufficient resources and funding are identified to maintain competence and ensure continual professional development.

38. The expectations and performance statements for this Element are set out in the following pages.

Element 6: Personnel Competence, Resources and Training

The Expectations in this Element are:

E6.1 The Defence Area has sufficient resources in place aligned to its risk profile.

E6.2 The Defence Area has defined responsibilities, accountabilities, and delegations for safety management.

E6.3 The Defence Area has plans in place to support recruitment, deployment, career development, retention, and succession of its people.

E6.4 Training programmes are in place that include safety skills enabling the workforce to meet Defence requirements.

E6.5 A competency process is in place to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements.

Documents often associated with this Element:

- 1LOD assurance reports
- Annual Budget Cycle (ABC) planning (for inclusion of safety requirements)
- Command / Strategic plan
- Defence Area business plans
- Defence Area Operating Model
- Defence Area safety management arrangements
- Skills framework
- Defence organisation workforce plans and succession planning
- Terms of reference for key personnel with safety management responsibilities
- Training needs analysis

Expectation 6.1 The Defence Area has sufficient resources in place aligned to its risk profile.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
• There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that there is an effective process for managing resources impacting the Defence Area's ability to manage its risk profile. • There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that resource allocation for safety is considered in financial and business planning.	• There is a process for managing resources, but significant weaknesses exist resulting in ineffective management of the Defence Area's risk profile. • Safety resource allocation is considered in finance and business planning, but limited actions are taken to address this.	• There is a process for managing resources with minor weaknesses resulting in resource allocation being well balanced across the Defence Area to reflect the Area's risk profile. • There is some but could be improved evidence that safety resource allocation is regularly and effectively reviewed.	• The Defence Area looks beyond its organisational boundaries for factors which may impact on its current resource allocation and collaborates with others to achieve continual improvement in planning future resource allocation in line with its risk profile. • There is robust evidence that safety management is adequately resourced and regularly reviewed.

Expectation 6.2 The Defence Area has defined responsibilities, accountabilities and delegations for safety management.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
Safety management roles and responsibilities are loosely defined. The workforce is not aware of their specific responsibilities with regards to safety.	Safety management roles and responsibilities are defined across the Defence Area and maintained centrally but are not updated to reflect changes in personnel and / or responsibilities.	Safety management roles and responsibilities are clearly documented and available for all the workforce to access. Changes to personnel and / or responsibilities are updated on a timely basis.	Safety management roles and responsibilities are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in resourcing, accountabilities, and authorities. Changes are communicated across the Defence Area, and all the workforce is aware of their own and others' roles.

Expectation 6.3 The Defence Area has plans in place to support recruitment, deployment, career development, retention and succession of its people.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
The Defence Area does not have clear plans in place to support recruitment, workforce development or competency management processes for safety management, and associated people policies make little or no reference to safety considerations.	The Defence Area has defined plans to support recruitment, deployment, career development, retention, and succession of its people in safety management; however, this does not translate into effective policies and there is a misalignment of objectives.	There are a range of processes in place to manage organisational competence including deployment, career development, retention and succession and resilience planning. These are generally effective and subject to periodic review, with outcomes feeding into workforce policies on recruitment, selection, and training.	- Highly effective plans are in place for recruitment, deployment, career development, retention, and succession planning for safety management workforce. Plans are supported by training programmes, with regular reviews to meet objectives and applicable legal or other requirements. - Adoption of good practice from outside organisational boundary to drive continual improvement.

Expectation 6.4 Training programmes are in place that include safety skills enabling the workforce to meet Defence requirements.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that training programmes are in place that include safety skills.	- There is some, but not enough evidence that training programmes are in place that include safety skills and the level of effectiveness varies. - Training is provided on an ad-hoc basis when needs are identified locally. There is an incomplete or incoherent plan to provide safety training for all who need it.	- There is some but could be improved evidence that training programmes are in place that include safety skills. - There is a centrally coordinated and communicated training programmes throughout the Defence Area. Adherence is monitored formally; safety training requirements are reviewed and updated annually.	There is robust evidence that the Defence Area has processes to continually improve training programmes that include safety skills. This includes actively consulting and engaging with the workforce.

Expectation 6.5 A competency process is in place to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that formal processes to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements.	- There are limited processes to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements but this is not carried out consistently across the Defence Area. - Limited arrangements are in place to develop skills through CPD.	There are processes to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements with only minor weaknesses evident.	- There are robust processes to assess and assure qualifications, behaviours, skills of the workforce to meet Defence safety requirements, including well established CPD arrangement. - Processes consider succession, business resilience, continuity planning and effective CPD arrangements.